



Expanding High-Quality Infant and Toddler Coursework
through a partnership with the Office of Early Learning

Request for Information

Request No. DOE 2018-22

- Deadline to Respond -
April 24, 2018 at 2:00 pm (local time)

Request for Information - RFI No. DOE 2018-22

ALL VENDORS:

The enclosed packet contains a "REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)" for the design of three separate web based infant and toddler credit bearing courses that will align with the Child Development Associate credential. The RFI consists of the following documents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Scope of Services
- III. Vendor Information Package (VIP) Response Requirements

In order for your response to be considered, the Request for Information response shall be executed completely and returned in a sealed envelope **clearly displaying the RFI number and Vendor name by 2:00pm (Local Time) on April 24, 2018.**

Responses must be mailed to:

**Delaware Department of Education, Finance Office
Attn: Meaghan Brennan
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901**

Should you need additional information, please call Meaghan Brennan at (302) 735-4170 or email Meaghan.Brennan@DOE.k12.de.us

I. INTRODUCTION

A. RFI DESIGNATED CONTACT

All requests, questions, or other communications about this RFI must be made in writing to DDOE. Address all communications to the person listed below; communications made to other State of Delaware personnel or attempts to ask questions by phone or in person will not be allowed or recognized as valid. Vendors shall rely only on written statements issued by the RFI designated contact.

Meaghan Brennan
Delaware Department of Education, Finance Office
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901 or Meaghan.Brennan@DOE.k12.de.us

To ensure that written requests are received and answered in a timely manner, electronic mail (e-mail) correspondence is acceptable, but other forms of delivery, such as postal and courier services can also be used.

B. CONTACT WITH STATE EMPLOYEE

Direct contact with State of Delaware employees other than the DDOE Designated Contact regarding this RFI is expressly prohibited without prior consent. Vendors directly contacting State of Delaware employees risk elimination of their response from further consideration. Exceptions exist only for organizations currently doing business in the DDOE who require contact in the normal course of doing that business.

C. RFI OBLIGATION

The RFI is a request for information only, and is not a solicitation to provide goods and services to the DDOE. There will be no contract awarded because of this RFI. Nothing in the Vendor Information Packages, or in DDOE's remarks or responses to the Vendor Information Packages or any individual Vendor, will be considered binding for a future contract.

1. *Confidentiality*

All information included in this RFI is confidential and only for the recipient's knowledge. No information included in this document or in discussions connected to it may be disclosed to any other party.

2. *Ownership of Materials*

Ownership of all documentary material originated and prepared for DDOE pursuant to this RFI shall belong exclusively to DDOE; therefore, any and all documents submitted may be returned only at the option of DDOE. DDOE reserves the right to use any and all information contained in a Vendor Information Package to the extent permitted by law.

3. *Vendor Ethics and Integrity*

The Vendor is obligated to meet high standards of ethics and integrity in order to be considered a qualified Vendor by DDOE. These standards can be violated according to the conditions identified below:

- The Vendor and employees shall not offer or give any gift, gratuity, favor, entertainment, loan, or any other thing of material monetary value to any DDOE employee.
- The Vendor and employees shall take no action to create an unfair, unethical or illegal competitive advantage for itself or others.

4. *Costs Associated With Submission*

Neither DDOE nor the State of Delaware shall be liable for any of the

costs incurred by a Vendor in preparing or submitting a Vendor Information Package, including, but not limited to preparation, copying, postage and delivery fees, and expenses associated with any demonstrations or presentations which may be offered or accepted as a result of the RFI. Each Vendor Information Package should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the Vendor's ability. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.

5. *Disclosure of Vendor Information Package Contents*

The State of Delaware is a public agency as defined by State law and, as such, it is subject to the Delaware Freedom of Information Act, 29 Del. C. Ch. 100. Under the law, all State of Delaware records are public records (unless otherwise declared by law to be confidential) and are subject to inspection and copying by any person.

All information submitted by a Vendor may be treated as public information by DDOE unless the Vendor properly requests that information be treated as confidential or proprietary at the time of submitting the Vendor Information Package. Vendors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the relevant laws and administrative rules governing the release of information by DDOE to the public.

Any Vendor Information Package that contains information that the Vendor wishes to remain confidential must submit the “confidential” information in a separate, sealed envelope labeled “Proprietary Information”. The envelope must contain a letter from the Vendor’s legal counsel describing the documents in the envelope, representing in good faith that the information in each document is not a “public record” as defined by 29 Del. C sec. 10002(d), and briefly stating the reasons that each document meets the said definitions.

6. *Vendor Standing For Any Subsequent RFP*

An RFI response is not mandatory for a Vendor to later receive an RFP and to bid on such requests. Nonetheless, as a result of the RFI submission, Vendors may jeopardize their qualifications to receive an RFP and participate in the State’s bidding process if the Vendor furnishes any statement, representation, warranty, or certification in connection with this RFI or a contract resulting from an RFP that is materially false.

D. RFI QUESTION AND ANSWER PROCESS

The Department will allow written requests for clarification of the RFI. All RFI questions shall be received no later than April 9, 2018. All questions should be posted on DDOE's website at:

<https://DDOEapppublic01.DDOE.k12.de.us/BidManagementPublic/#home> All questions will be consolidated into a single set of responses and posted on both DDOE's website, as well as the State's website at www.bids.delaware.gov by April 12, 2018. Vendor names will be removed from questions in the responses released. Questions should be submitted in the following format.

Deviations from this format will not be accepted.

Responses will not contain vendor information. Questions must be submitted in the following format.

Section
designation
Page number
Text needing clarification.

II. SCOPE OF SERVICES

A. PURPOSE

Office of Early Learning Department of Education was awarded a W.K Kellogg grant for the purpose of developing the infrastructure to support a cohort of infant and toddler teachers in obtaining higher education coursework specific to their professional field. This grant will support work in:

- Supporting cohorts of early childhood professionals in obtaining an Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential TM through online coursework with a complimentary coaching structure sponsored by the State
- Articulating a completed Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential TM for college credit in Delaware
- Designing three classes, nine credits, of infant and toddler higher education coursework into a hybrid model offering with an institute of higher education partner
- Supporting cohorts of early childhood professionals in completing nine credits of designed infant and toddler coursework with a complimentary coaching structure sponsored by the State
- Articulating nine credits of designed infant and toddler coursework into a State-recognized infant and toddler credential

This RFI is to provide the DDOE OEL with information regarding the development of three courses, nine credits, to be scoped into an infant and toddler credential that will be recognized statewide. This infant and toddler

credential will need to be articulated into the institute of higher education's early childhood degree program. DDOE invites institutes of higher education to submit their capabilities and interest relative to this Request for Information. DDOE may reference this material as indicative of capabilities in the event a Request for Proposal (RFP) is issued.

B. STATEMENT OF NEEDS

DOE OEL is examining stackable credentials for early childhood professionals (serving children birth through age five) to encourage the advancement of their education. The work of the W.K. Kellogg grant will assist in building the foundation for stackable credentials. Through the W.K. Kellogg grant, DOE OEL is investigating the articulation of the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™ into an early childhood degree program in Delaware for at least six credits. These CDA credits will allow early childhood professionals to then move toward additional credit hours, scoped into a credential.

DDOE OEL is looking for an institute of higher education to develop and maintain the scope of coursework, provided through a hybrid model that will equate to an infant and toddler credential. The credential must consist of at least three courses and articulate into an existing early childhood degree program at the institute of higher education. The design and implementation of a cohort model is strongly encouraged with the instruction of coursework done either at an early childhood program or common location near students.

BACKGROUND: DELAWARE'S EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS:

Delaware is currently reviewing its quality rating and improvement system and teacher certification. Early learning experiences build critical foundational skills starting at birth; the State is committed to developing and supporting educated, prepared teachers who can teach these foundational skills in programs. Through significant investments, the State has targeted revisions to early childhood professionals' competencies and standards and necessary enhancements to the professional development system.

With the W.K Kellogg grant, DDOE OEL will begin design of stackable credentials for early childhood professionals. The articulation of the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™ for credits into an early childhood degree program will be the first step towards obtaining Delaware credentials. The CDA is a nationally recognized credential in the field of early childhood education. It is based on a set of competencies which guide early learning professionals' work toward becoming highly qualified teachers.

In year one of the grant, DOE OEL will be piloting a CDA cohort model with

participants across the state. This cohort will complete the required 120 hours of CDA course material online; face to face follow up will occur on regularly with a State-identified coach. The coach will also be providing onsite coaching at the participant's center to connect CDA course material to the classroom. Once the participants complete the course material, the coach will work with them on the development of their portfolio for the CDA and prepare them for all subsequent steps in the CDA approval process. Due to the rigor of the CDA, DOE OEL will look to partner with an institute of higher education to articulate the CDA for six within existing early childhood degree programs.

Following the CDA, the need for stackable credentials to motivate professionals to obtain higher education coursework is key. State support will be targeted to fill the critical need for infant and toddler early childhood professionals in Delaware. The Infant and Toddler Credential will be the foundation for additional credentials for early childhood professionals serving children birth through three. OEL is looking for the development of a three course package leading to an Infant and Toddler Credential. The three course package should be available:

in a hybrid format, which includes online and in-person formats statewide as a cohort model.

The course content must be foundational infant and toddler content, for example in areas of; curriculum development, family engagement and teacher/child interactions. The Infant and Toddler Credential courses will need to be articulated for nine credits into an existing early childhood degree program.

OEL knows the importance of the transition process for early childhood professionals to start their higher education journey. OEL has identified additional resources that will be available to the cohort members to support them in obtaining the Infant and Toddler Credential. The cohort members will have a State-identified coach who will observe and meet with them at their early childhood centers to provide onsite coaching. This coach will align each student's coaching goals to the strategies and approaches taught during the each credential course.

VENDOR INFORMATION PACKAGE (VIP) RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

1. COVER LETTER

Each VIP response shall have a cover letter on the letterhead of the company or organization submitting the response. The cover letter must briefly summarize the Vendor's ability to provide the services specified in the RFI. The cover letter must also identify a contact person which includes a phone number and email address.

2. NUMBER OF COPIES WITH MAILING OF RESPONSES

Each VIP response shall be submitted with one (1) paper copy and one (1) electronic copy on a flash drive. VIP responses are to be sent to the DDOE and received no later than April 24, 2018 at 2:00 pm (local time). The VIP response shall be delivered by Express Delivery (e.g., FedEx, UPS, etc.), US Mail, or by hand to:

Delaware Department of Education, Finance Office

Attn: Meaghan Brennan

401 Federal Street, Suite 2

Dover, DE 19901

RFI No. DOE 2018-22

Any response submitted by US Mail shall be sent by either certified or registered mail. Any response received after the date and time deadline referenced above will be returned unopened.

3. REQUIRED RESPONSES (Limit 6 pages)

(a) Vendor Background

- (i) Please supply a narrative history of your organization and proof of financial viability.**
- (ii) Provide data regarding your organization's management structure, number of employees and other pertinent information regarding your business.**

(b) Service Provision

- (i) Describe the services, processes and structures your organization would use to address the needs outlined in the "Statement of Needs" section of this RFI.**

(c) Budget

- (i) Include a budget page outlining the costs for provision of service.**